

The Honorable Commissioner of Patents
Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
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The Applicant has filed a timely Notice of Appeal from the action of the Examiner in finally rejecting all of the claims that were considered in this application. This Brief is being filed under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.192. The Filing Fee, as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(c), is submitted herewith.

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REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest is Microsoft Corporation, by way of assignment from Sierra et al., who is the named inventive entity and is captioned in the present brief.

RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

None.

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1, 5, 9, 13, 17 and 21 are pending in the application and stand finally rejected by the Examiner.

STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

None.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

Beginning at page 3 of the subject Application, exemplary use of an automatic and non-modal method is described. The method in this example may further include monitoring user input activities and automatically displaying the reminder information associated with the user input field through the non-modal mechanism after a defined period of user input inactivity. For example, if a user is unable to remember a password, then the method provides an automatic non-intrusive way for the reminder information, which the user previously entered when setting up their password, to be displayed. A tip balloon is one type of a non-modal display mechanism that does require the user to respond and does not interfere graphically and/or operationally with the ongoing graphical user interface supported process. Thus, in this example the method is both automatic (e.g., does not require additional user inputs) and non-modal, e.g., it does not interfere graphically and/or operationally with the ongoing graphical user interface supported process.

Independent Claim 1 recites a method for use in a graphical user interface configured to support a login operation, the method comprising:

- displaying at least one user identifier prompt (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 104) within a graphical user interface (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 100), the at least one user identifier prompt including at least one selectable user area (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 106) operatively associated with a previously configured user capable of completing a login operation by inputting user password input;

- upon receiving user input selecting the at least one selectable user area, displaying at least one user input field (e.g., page 7, lines 6-13, FIG. 2, reference number 110) within the graphical user interface, wherein the at least one user input field is automatically configured to operatively receive user password input associated with the login operation; and
- while conditions allow for the reception of the user password input and it is determined (e.g., page 8, lines 2-10) that there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation, then automatically displaying reminder information (e.g., page 8, lines 4-15) associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface.

Independent Claim 9 recites a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for causing at least one processing unit to support a login operation by performing steps comprising:

- displaying at least one user identifier prompt (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 104) within a graphical user interface (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 100), the at least one user identifier prompt including at least one selectable user area (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 106) operatively associated with a previously configured user capable of completing a login operation by inputting user password input;
- upon receiving user input selecting the at least one selectable user area, displaying at least one user input field (e.g., page 7, lines 6-13, FIG. 2, reference number 110) on the display within the graphical user interface, wherein the at least one user

input field is automatically configured to operatively receive user password input associated with the login operation;

- determining if there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation while conditions allow for the reception of the user input (e.g., page 8, lines 2-10); and
- automatically displaying reminder information (e.g., page 8, lines 4-15) associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface based on the failure to operatively receive the user password input.

Independent Claim 17 recites an arrangement comprising:

- memory (e.g., page 4, line 3; FIG. 1, reference number 22);
- a display device (e.g., page 5, lines 11-14; FIG. 1, reference number 47);
- a user input device (e.g., page 5, lines 6-10; FIG. 1, reference numbers 40, 42); and
- a processor (e.g., page 4, line 3; FIG. 1, reference number 21) operatively coupled to the memory, the display device and the user input device, the processor being configured to:
 - display at least one user identifier prompt (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 104) within a graphical user interface (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 100) on the display device, the at least one user identifier prompt including at least one selectable user area (e.g., page 6, line 24 to page 7, line 5; FIG. 2, reference number 106) operatively associated with a previously configured user capable of completing a login operation by inputting user password input;

- receive user input selecting the at least one selectable user area, and in response display at least one user input field (e.g., page 7, lines 6-13, FIG. 2; reference number 110) within the graphical user interface, wherein the at least one user input field is automatically configured to operatively receive user password input associated with the login operation;
- determine if there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation while conditions allow for the reception of the user input (e.g., page 8, lines 2-10); and
- automatically display reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface based on the failure to operatively receive the user password input (e.g., page 8, lines 4-15).

GROUND OF REJECTION

1. Whether Claims 1, 5, 9, 13, 17 and 21 were properly rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,425,102 to Moy (hereinafter "Moy").

ARGUMENT

Ground of Rejection. Claims 1, 5, 9, 13, 17 and 21 satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and therefore is not anticipated by Moy.

Claim 1 recites a method as further described in the claim appendix that includes the following in part:

- while conditions allow for the reception of the user password input and it is determined that there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation, then *automatically displaying reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface.*

Claim 9 recites a computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for causing at least one processing unit to support a login operation by performing steps that includes the following in part:

- *automatically displaying reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface* based on the failure to operatively receive the user password input.

Claim 17 recites an arrangement that includes the following in part:

- a processor operatively coupled to the memory, the display device and the user input device, the processor being configured to:
 - *automatically display reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface* based on the failure to operatively receive the user password input.

None of the submitted references, alone or in combination, disclose, teach or suggest automatically display reminder information associated with the user input field

through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface as recited in Claims 1, 9 and 17.

Moy is directed to a computer security system with password "hints" if the user fails to recall the password. This apparatus is appended to existing computer security apparatus and operates as an adjunct thereto. The user invokes the password and/or data file encryption processes (hereinafter collectively referred to as password protection system) in the usual manner. When the user thereafter attempts to access the protected data files via the password protection system and cannot remember the password used, the computer security apparatus inquires whether the user wishes to receive a password hint from the apparatus. **The user can then request a password hint, which was provided to the system by the user upon the password protection initially being invoked.** The computer security apparatus then presents the prerecorded password hint to the user in an attempt to jog the user's memory to recall the password. Thus, although a hint is provided in Moy, **the hint is manual and not automatic** and therefore requires additional inputs from the user in order to be provided. *See Moy, Col. 2, Lines 18-35.*

Beginning at page 3 of the subject application, however, exemplary use of an automatic and non-modal method is described. The method in this example may further include monitoring user input activities and automatically displaying the reminder information associated with the user input field through the non-modal

mechanism after a defined period of user input inactivity. For example, if a user is unable to remember a password, then the method **provides an automatic non-intrusive way for the reminder information, which the user previously entered when setting up their password, to be displayed.** A tip balloon is one type of a non-modal display mechanism that does require the user to respond and does not interfere graphically and/or operationally with the ongoing graphical user interface supported process. Thus, in this example the method is both automatic (e.g., does not require additional user inputs) and non-modal, e.g., it does not interfere graphically and/or operationally with the ongoing graphical user interface supported process.

Further discussion of automatic versus manual display may be found in the subject Application beginning at page 7. Manual display is described as follows. If, for some reason, the user is unable to remember their password, then the user can manually request a "hint" using a manual hint area (e.g., manual hint area 114 of FIG. 2). Manual hint area may include text, graphics, etc. When the user selects manual hint area, reminder information, which was previously entered by the user during set up, is displayed in a non-modal manner, such as through use of a hint balloon (e.g., hint balloon 116 of FIG. 2).

Since the manual hint requesting process described above requires users to actively solicit a hint, this may lengthen the login process. Thus, in accordance with certain implementations a passively activated hint process (i.e., automatic as described

earlier and as described in relation to the flow chart of FIG. 3 which is discussed in greater detail below) is also provided. In this example, the hint balloon is displayed without the user manually requesting it whenever the user appears to be having trouble remembering their password. Thus, for example, if the user has failed to input information into input field for a given amount of time, then hint balloon, or other like non-modal display mechanism, is activated to show the user reminder information. Accordingly, a timing mechanism can be implemented within the logon process that monitors the user inputs and selectively activates hint balloon.

The subject application further describes how this above passively activated hint process is "automatic". For example, beginning in relation to page 8, line 24 which discusses steps 204-208 of FIG. 3, for users that do input reminder information 116, manual and automatic displaying of the reminder information 116 through hint balloon 118, for example, is available. Thus, per step 204, during subsequent logon the user is provided with at least one user input field 110. In step 206, it is determined if the user may benefit from the reminder information. This can be accomplished as described above by monitoring the user's inactivity with respect to the input field. Next, in step 208, the reminder information is displayed using a non-modal technique, such as, for example, hint balloon 118.

The Examiner asserts Moy at column 6, lines 21-25 for disclosure of the above limitation, which is excerpted as follows:

Means, responsive to said user failing to provide said password, for retrieving a first of said succession of hints from said hint storing means; and means for transmitting said retrieved first hint to a display device for display to said user. *Moy, Col. 6, Lines 21-25.*

Moy, in neither the above excerpted portion nor elsewhere in the reference, discloses automation nor a non-modal mechanism.

In the Office Action Dated September 10, 2002, the Examiner asserted the following:

Moy discloses automatically displaying reminder information associated with the user input filed within the graphical user interface (fig. 4), **but he does not disclose that being done through a non-modal mechanism.** *Office Action Dated September 10, 2002, Page 5 (emphasis added).*

Therefore the Examiner has previously acknowledged that Moy does not disclose, teach or suggest a non-modal mechanism. However, the Examiner then asserted in the Final Office Action that "because Examiner did not use Moy reference in the subsequent Office Actions, this assertion was considered to be withdrawn". *Office Action Dated November 3, 2004.* It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is in error, in that, Moy is neither automatic nor non-modal. Reasoning was not given as to why the original assertion made by the Examiner is now in error. Regardless, the Examiner then asserted the following:

“Non-modal mechanism”, as defined in page 2, lines 13-16 in the specification, is a method that automatically displays reminder information at appropriate times, without requiring an additional user input or interfering with the user’s ability to interact with the graphical user interface. According to Moy, after the user activates the hint system by selecting on a menu choice “Hint” as illustrated in FIG. 3 (col. 4, lines 10-12), then responsive to the user failing to provide the password, the system retrieves a first of the succession of hints from the hint storing storage and display to the user (col 6, lines 21-25). If the password does not match the stored password, the hint display is **automatically** retransmitted to the user and this process of hint and password retry is **iteratively repeated** until the sequence of password hints is exhausted (col. 4, lines 43-48). Therefore, Moy clearly teaches the **“Non-modal mechanism”** feature as claimed by applicant. *See Office Action Dated November 3, 2004, Pages 3-4 (emphasis in original).*

In short, the Examiner first asserts that a non-modal mechanism “automatically display reminder information ... without requiring an additional user input or interfering with the user’s ability to interact with the graphical user interface”. Then, in the very next sentence, the Examiner states that Moy requires an additional user input, e.g., “According to Moy, after the user activates the hint system by selecting on a menu choice ‘Hint’ as illustrated in FIG. 3 (col. 4, lines 10-12)”. As acknowledged by the Examiner, Moy requires an additional user input to provide a hint, **and thus is manual and not automatic.**

Accordingly, Moy is not automatic (e.g., requires a user input to initiate the hint) and is modal, e.g., the input interferes with the user’s ability to interact with the graphical user interface. This requirement is found throughout Moy. Thus it is respectfully submitted that a *prima facie* case of anticipation has not been established. Indeed, the Examiner admits that Moy is manual in the example given in the *Advisory*

Action, which is excerpted as follows: “‘Hint’ function is selected at the very beginning of the login process to turn on the non-modal password reminder.” *See Advisory Action, Page 2*. Thus, Moy is manual and as previously admitted by the Examiner, Moy is modal and not non-modal. .

Claim 5 depends directly from Claim 1, **Claim 13** depends directly from Claim 9, and **Claim 21** depends directly from Claim 17. Therefore, each of these dependent claims is allowable as depending from an allowable base claim. These claims are also allowable for their own recited features which, in combination with those recited in respective Claims 1, 9 and 17 are neither shown nor suggested in the references of record, either singly or in combination with one another.

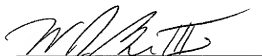
Accordingly, for at least these reasons, the pending claims are allowable and the Applicant respectfully requests that the Board overturn this Ground of Rejection.

CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully considers this application to be in condition for allowance and respectfully request the Board to overturn the final rejection and that the Examiner pass this application to allowance.

Dated this 17th day of February, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX: CLAIMS ON APPEAL

Listing of Claims:

1. (previously presented) A method for use in a graphical user interface configured to support a login operation, the method comprising:

displaying at least one user identifier prompt within a graphical user interface, the at least one user identifier prompt including at least one selectable user area operatively associated with a previously configured user capable of completing a login operation by inputting user password input;

upon receiving user input selecting the at least one selectable user area, displaying at least one user input field within the graphical user interface, wherein the at least one user input field is automatically configured to operatively receive user password input associated with the login operation; and

while conditions allow for the reception of the user password input and it is determined that there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation, then automatically displaying reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface.

2-4. (canceled)

5. (previously presented) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the reminder information includes user provided password reminder information.

6-8. (canceled)

9. (previously presented) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for causing at least one processing unit to support a login operation by performing steps comprising:

displaying at least one user identifier prompt within a graphical user interface, the at least one user identifier prompt including at least one selectable user area operatively associated with a previously configured user capable of completing a login operation by inputting user password input;

upon receiving user input selecting the at least one selectable user area, displaying at least one user input field on the display within the graphical user interface, wherein the at least one user input field is automatically configured to operatively receive user password input associated with the login operation;

determining if there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation while conditions allow for the reception of the user input; and

automatically displaying reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface based on the failure to operatively receive the user password input.

10-12. (canceled)

13. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 9, wherein the reminder information includes user provided password reminder information.

14-16. (canceled)

17. (previously presented) An arrangement comprising:

memory;

a display device;

a user input device; and

a processor operatively coupled to the memory, the display device and the user input device, the processor being configured to:

display at least one user identifier prompt within a graphical user interface on the display device, the at least one user identifier prompt including at least one selectable user area operatively associated with a previously configured user capable of completing a login operation by inputting user password input;

receive user input selecting the at least one selectable user area, and in response display at least one user input field within the graphical user interface, wherein the at least one user input field is automatically configured to operatively receive user password input associated with the login operation;

determine if there has been a failure to operatively receive the user password input for the login operation while conditions allow for the reception of the user input; and

automatically display reminder information associated with the user input field through a non-modal mechanism within the graphical user interface based on the failure to operatively receive the user password input.

18-20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The arrangement as recited in Claim 17, wherein the reminder information includes user provided password reminder information previously stored in the memory.

22-24. (canceled)

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None.

RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None.